



Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is caused by a blow to or a jolt of the head, or a penetrating injury that disrupts the normal function of the brain. The result may be temporary or permanent changes, impairing physical, cognitive, and emotional/behavioral functioning. Injuries to the brain range from mild (concussion) to moderate or severe (coma).

Virginia & National Statistics

- ❖ The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimate 1.6 million traumatic brain injuries occur each year in the United States, resulting in 51,000 deaths, 290,000 hospitalizations, and 1.2 million Emergency Department visits.¹
- ❖ The CDC estimates that 2% of the U.S. population is living with a disability as a result of TBI²; in Virginia this means approximately 154,000 people have a TBI-related disability.
- ❖ Data from the Virginia Department of Health indicate that there were 6,895 TBI-related *deaths* and 18,452 TBI-related *hospitalizations* in Virginia between 2001-2005.³
- ❖ The number of Virginians who receive care for a TBI but who are *not hospitalized* is difficult to determine.
- ❖ Hospitalizations of people with TBI in Virginia resulted in charges of more than \$460 million³. However this figure includes initial hospitalization only, and *not* the follow-up rehabilitation or skilled nursing care required by many patients.
- ❖ In Virginia, as the rest of the country, the leading causes of unintentional hospitalization and death attributed to TBI are falls, followed by motor vehicle accidents.^{1,3}

Problems after Brain Injury

Depending upon the severity of the injury and the part of the brain that is injured, some of the following may be present:

Physical / Medical

Problems walking, talking, fine motor skills
Impaired hearing, seeing, smelling, touch, taste
Musculoskeletal problems
Headaches, dizziness, fatigue, seizures

Cognitive / Intellectual

Short-term memory problems
Slower processing of what is heard, seen, or read
Difficulty learning new information
Increased mental fatigue and distraction

Emotional / Behavioral

Impaired ability to control behavior
Difficulty controlling emotions
Depression, anxiety
Substance abuse

- ▶ Significant recovery from a brain injury and a return to productive living in the community are possible...*if* appropriate supports are available.

1. Langlois JA, Rutland-Brown W, Thomas KE. Traumatic brain injury in the United States: emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Nation Center for Injury Prevention and Control; 2004.

2. Thurman D, Alverson C, Dunn K, Guerrero J, Sniezek J. Traumatic brain injury in the United States: a public health perspective. *Journal of Head Trauma Rehabilitation* 1999;14(6):602-15.

3. Virginia Injury Update. Vol. 1, Issue 2, June 2007. Division of Injury and Violence Prevention, VDH.